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Vermont Begins Second Annual Search for Green Ribbon Schools

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) announced its second annual search for outstanding green and healthy schools. The AOE participates in the US Dept. of Education Green Ribbon Schools Program (ED-GRS), and last year three Vermont schools were honored: [Reading Elementary School](#), [Shelburne Community School](#), and [St. Albans City School](#).

Vermont has many schools that have learned how to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to nourish health and fitness awareness among students and staff, and to promote environmental literacy. Sustainability education and the awareness of green careers are growing and now schools will have the chance to be nationally recognized for their work.

Keeping students interested in and caring for the environment is crucial to our future. The GRS program seeks to highlight schools across the nation that are working every day to set a great example by saving energy and reducing operating costs, creating environmentally friendly learning spaces, promoting student health and providing environmental education to incorporate sustainability into the curriculum.

To be considered for the program, a school will have achieved or made considerable progress toward the three pillars established in the program: 1) energy efficient buildings; 2) healthy students and school environment; and 3) environmental literacy of all students. The combined achievement in these three areas will be the basis for the ED-GRS award.

Secretary of Education Armando Vilaseca said he expects a great deal of interest in the program. "Vermont is a leader in environmental awareness and in giving our children the tools they need to build a more sustainable future. We are pleased that our schools again have an opportunity to be nationally-recognized for their efforts to create a cleaner, greener, and healthier planet."

Schools are encouraged to complete the application and submit to the AOE for review by December 9, 2013. The AOE is authorized to nominate up to three public schools and one private school to US ED for the 2014 Green Ribbon designation. Learn more about Vermont's Green Ribbon School program here: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/green_ribbon.html.

Honorees will be announced next spring and US ED will host a national recognition award ceremony in Washington, D.C. in June.

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